



2020 elections & capitalist instability: How should we prepare?

By Sharon Black

The present election is taking place in a period of deep instability. It is fraught with incredible dangers and at the same time opportunities for the working class in this country. What takes place in the U.S. will have repercussions internationally.

A lot will depend on what we do.

On the one hand, an unprecedented movement against police terror and white supremacy has swept the country. There is not a single town or city that has not been touched by protests of one kind or another. While it is spontaneous to one degree, it is deeply political and can be characterized as a mass uprising.

This movement is a challenge to the capitalist state and it is taking up the long-delayed fundamental question of racism and white supremacy in this country, what was described by W.E.B. Du Bois as the “unfinished revolution” in his famous book “Black Reconstruction in America.”

This remarkable struggle is taking place in the midst of a deepening capitalist economic crisis, possibly the worst in our lifetimes, spurred on and coupled with a deadly pandemic that has killed more people in the United States than all the U.S. soldiers killed in the Vietnam War plus four other wars combined.

Unemployment is at record highs. The working class will eventually face a tsunami of evictions and foreclosures that will certainly top those of the 2008 capitalist crisis.

RNC ‘white power’ rally, DNC capitulates

It's easy to sum up the Republican National Convention as essentially a “white power” rally meant as a clarion call to all of Trump's most reactionary, racist, neofascist supporters. Patricia and Mark McCloskey, who pointed guns at Black Lives Matter protesters in St. Louis, Mo., spoke there. Both are facing charges of unlawful use of a weapon.

None of the rhetoric of the RNC was hidden or coded. It was an outright racist attack on the burgeoning movement, designed to spur on violence against protesters under the cover of labeling the BLM movement as “rioters, antifa, anarchists, outsiders and communists.”

No one can forget that Trump began his first campaign by labeling Mexican immigrants as “rapists and criminals.”

The Democratic National Convention was no beacon of hope. Instead, it was in many respects a cowardly reaction to Trump's campaign of red-baiting and attacks on protesters. In essence, the DNC agenda was driven by the rightwing.

Republican billionaires and militarists like Colin Powell, Michael Bloomberg and former Ohio Gov. John Kasich, who ran on a campaign to abolish abortion, shared the DNC podium. On the other hand, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was given a mere 90 seconds to speak.

Biden's denunciation of “riots,” referring to the Kenosha protests, does the exact opposite of defending people against the arch reactionary movement that Trump has unleashed. It emboldens them.

More recently, the Biden campaign touted former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's endorsement — a slap in the face to the people of Flint, a majority Black city whose water was poisoned; Detroit, whose assets were robbed through imposed bankruptcy; and Benton Harbor. Republican



Mass demonstrations and a general strike in Puerto Rico overthrew Gov. Ricky Rosselló in July 2019. We should prepare for a mass strike against a stolen election.

Snyder imposed “emergency financial manager” dictators over more than half of Michigan's Black population.

Stolen election, Trump coup

In this context, it is impossible to ignore the possibility of the November election being either stolen or hijacked by the utterly undemocratic Electoral College system, or the serious threat of Trump refusing to leave the White House.

Trump's antics should be taken seriously, when he tells people to vote twice, or spews lies that mail-in ballots are invalid. His attempts to dismantle the U.S. Postal Service are clearly in preparation for what might turn out to be much larger developments in November.

We should look back in history at the 2000 election between George W. Bush and Al Gore, when right-wing violence and vote tampering in Florida helped Bush steal the election by gaining an Electoral College advantage.

Our immediate tasks

The capitalist state's repressive apparatus — that is, the reactionary police, sheriffs, Homeland Security and Border Patrol, and their extralegal forces like the Proud Boys, neo-Nazis, etc. — was temporarily caught off guard by the tidal wave of protests all across the country. Now, under the direction of Trump, they are unleashing a campaign of terror in an attempt to crush the movement.

Let's vigorously defend and broaden support for all of those arrested, whether it is in Minneapolis, Portland, Kenosha, San Diego, Tallahassee, New York City or in so many other places.

Prepare for November: Call for general strike of the people

There should be no passive acceptance of a stolen election, regardless of how it unfolds. Any such circumstance must be considered illegitimate. The stakes are too high.

The working class must prepare as much as possible to intervene on its own behalf. We can't wait for the Democrats — particularly if they are inclined to lay down and wait for another four years — nor concede and stand on the sidelines.

Instead, we should prepare for a general strike of the people. Whether employed or unemployed, students or youth, organized or unorganized — the goal is to shut the system down through massive action. For those who are able, plan to march on Washington, D.C. and occupy the capital until

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Trump leaves. We need to appeal to the unions and to the community directly.

If Biden prevails, it does not mean the struggle is off.

He will be presiding over a capitalist crisis and has no answers whatsoever for our class. Our message must be to energetically push the movement forward to demand: End police terror and white supremacy! Health care for all! Cancel rents and mortgage foreclosures! Jobs or guaranteed income for all! Hazard pay and workers' rights! No to wars and sanctions!

Should workers prepare for ‘October surprise’?

The potential for imperialist war, which is driven by economic forces beyond either candidate's personal control, is greater than ever — whether it is against Venezuela, Iran, Russia or China.

In an act of provocation, U.S. spy planes have flown over Chinese military bases. The rhetoric against China has continued unabated.

Leonardo Flores, Latin American coordinator for Code Pink, has documented an increase in U.S. action against Venezuela.

Iran continues to be under attack from severe sanctions and military threats.

Intervene as an independent class force

For much of the working class, the pending elections are viewed as a referendum against racism and reaction. There is little illusion that a vote for Biden will end the suffering that much of the population is enduring. It is more a question of getting rid of Trump.

Some younger voters, particularly those involved in the Bernie Sanders movement, who passionately fought for health care, the Green New Deal, an end to student debt and many other issues, view a vote for Biden as a dead end.

The elections will certainly be an important barometer. But what ultimately determines the direction of history, whether it is this immediate period or more long term, is the struggle between classes. This includes not only our class, whether unemployed or working, of all nationalities and genders, and global in character; but also bigger world developments reflecting the crisis of capitalism.

Our job as revolutionary socialists is to do everything in our power to defend the current movement and push beyond the electoral arena. What is critical for the working class is to intervene boldly in its own interests in whatever crisis presents itself during the early winter months. □

Atlanta activists rally for Rayshard Brooks Peace Center

By Lizz Toledo

Atlanta — The Sleep-In Activists, Community Movement Builders and many other organizations, including the Socialist Unity Party, are calling for the Wendy's restaurant parking lot where Rayshard Brooks was murdered by Police Officer Garrett Rolfe to be turned into the Rayshard Brooks Peace Center.

At a rally for the Rayshard Brooks Peace Center on Aug. 30, activists called for an end to police brutality, solidarity with Jacob Blake and the Kenosha protesters, and an end to racist capitalism. They called for unity among organizations and encouraged those not yet involved in an organization to join one, because together we will find our freedom.

Speakers also reminded the audience of mostly Black and Brown young people that we can't expect the Democratic Party or electoral politics to give us our freedom. In fact, Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms was a speaker at the Democratic National Convention two weeks before. She never even mentioned Rayshard Brooks' name, while she pontificated about how much she cares about justice for Black lives at the hands of racist police.

While Mayor Bottoms and other politicians make assumptions about what the community wants in place of the burned-down Wendy's, the Sleep-In Activists have been going door to door, speaking directly to people in the Pittsburgh and Peopleshtown neighborhoods, and asking them what they thought about replacing the Wendy's with a community peace center in honor of Brooks.

"The response has been overwhelmingly favorable," said organizer Lady A, a longtime resident of this community. Activists have collected over 1,200 signatures. "I



PHOTO: SLL

did not get one negative response. Everyone I asked to sign, signed it," she added.

Fighting for community control

On June 12, Rayshard Brooks was killed by officers of the Atlanta Police Department at the Wendy's drive-through on University Avenue. Many community members witnessed the murder and were traumatised by the sight of Brooks, a Black man and father, being shot in the back, kicked while he was down, and a police officer standing on his body as he lay dying.

This happened in a poor, working-class, Black community that has witnessed and experienced the brutality of the APD for years. This time, the community decided to take control of this sacred space as a liberated zone for justice, grieving and community control.

"In this space, people were barbecuing and feeding their neighbors. We had children's activities and community gardens," another longtime resident and activist told Struggle-La Lucha. "In this space, you could see the roots of community control sprouting."

Armed community defenders protected the area from white supremacists who occasionally drove by and shot at the crowd.

But on July 6, Mayor Bottoms and the Atlanta police violently stole this liberated space from the community and destroyed the people's memorial for Rayshard Brooks. Days later, the mayor sent her goons to demolish the site.

Now, the community demands that not only this space, but all spaces and agencies in the neighborhoods of Pittsburgh and Peopleshtown, be placed under community control. They are calling for a Rayshard Brooks Peace Center, to defund the APD, and to distribute these funds to community-controlled organizations serving the people. And not use them to benefit corporations like Wendy's that contribute nothing to the community, or the capitalist agenda itself.

We are the only ones who will make liberation for all possible. By staying in the streets, fighting united, protecting and defending each other, we will make a world where Black, Brown and Indigenous people are free to live up to our full potential. A world where our communities have full control of policing and all public safety agencies. A world where people are more important than profit — a united socialist world.

Sign the petition for the Rayshard Brooks Peace Center at tinyurl.com/y4xaxn9q.

Socialists reach out at D.C. anti-racist march



By Sharon Black

Washington, D.C. — On Aug. 28, Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido participated in the national "Commitment March: Get Your Knee Off Our Necks" on the 57th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Tens of thousands of people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial and the surrounding area, buoyed by the national uprising against police terror.

Throughout the day, contingents of young people continued to pour in, chanting "Black Lives Matter!"

Thousands of copies of Struggle-La Lucha newspaper were distributed, along with a supplement calling for reparations.

Andre Powell reported: "Struggle-La Lucha received a fantastic response! At our table, we also sold a much larger number of books than we anticipated. People eagerly signed up who were interested in socialism." □



SLL PHOTOS: SHARON BLACK

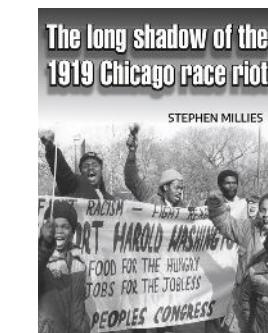
The long shadow of the 1919 Chicago race riot

by Stephen Millies

SLL articles include:

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Organize to defeat the racist backlash!

By Greg Butterfield

Recent events in Kenosha, Wis., and Portland, Ore., are the biggest signs that a racist backlash is underway in the United States against the righteous rebellion that followed the police murder of George Floyd in May and has continued through the summer.

The backlash originates with the billionaire class of big capitalists, landlords and bankers, takes shape through its state, politicians and media, and ends in the violent white supremacist gangs that are carrying out attacks on protesters and communities of color, often in collaboration with local police.

On Aug. 29, activists in Kenosha bringing food to protesters were kidnapped by federal agents. On Sept. 3 in New York's Times Square, cops escorted racist counter protesters to their car, which the fascists then drove into a crowd of Black Lives supporters, injuring several. In Louisville, Ky., armed fascists threatened protesters demanding justice for Breonna Taylor during the Kentucky Derby on Sept. 5. The same day, in Tallahassee, Fla., cops and Trump supporters targeted socialist student activists during protests that followed the grand jury exoneration of killer cops. The list goes on.

For Marxists, this is not an unexpected development. Every push forward by the masses in the struggle to secure their rights and advance their liberation is met by a counterattack of the ruling class, who are desperate to protect not only their own wealth and privileges but the capitalist system of exploitation upon which their power rests.

Anti-racist unity threatens bosses

The biggest threat to the capitalist system is working-class unity, and the bosses' most powerful weapon against unity is racism. That's why this summer's massive uprising—uniting Black, Brown and white workers and youth against the racist cops—scares them so much.

President Donald Trump openly waves the flag of white supremacy and urges his fascist supporters to greater acts of racist violence to silence and intimidate the movement. Trump defended Kyle Rittenhouse, the 17-year-old white supremacist who murdered two protesters in cold blood and wounded another in Kenosha.



Kenosha, Wis.

Shortly after, his supporters attacked Black Lives protesters in Portland. One of the Patriot Prayer neo-Nazis was allegedly shot dead by a white anti-fascist defending himself and other protesters. Trump then ordered a hit on Michael Reinoehl, which was carried out by federal agents on Sept. 3. Reinoehl's assassination was meant as a warning to the anti-racist movement.

But the backlash extends beyond the ultraright. Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has joined in, giving speeches and airing nationwide campaign ads condemning "looters" and "rioters"—essentially conceding Trump's argument and aiding his campaign to demonize anti-racist protesters and the Black community.

Before the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Biden gave aid and encouragement to killer cops by vowing not to "defund the police," reassuring his major funders and masters on Wall Street that nothing will really change if Democrats take the White House.

From Los Angeles to Minneapolis to New York, measures promised by local officials (mostly Democrats) to rein in police after Floyd's murder are being quietly defanged or dropped altogether.

The pages and airwaves of "liberal" corporate media are filled with stories questioning whether anyone really wants to "defund the police" amidst a wave of shootings in major cities. (Whether this "crime wave" emanates from the corrupt police departments themselves, as it often has in the past when they felt their funding and power threatened, is a ques-

tion that is never asked, however.)

Amidst all this blame-the-victim propaganda, we must remember that it was the burning of the police precinct in Minneapolis, and the righteous rebellion of the masses of people there and in other cities, that inspired the anti-racist struggle to new heights across the U.S. and forced the politicians and big business to address the epidemic of police violence.

What's different this time

There are many examples of capitalist backlash against popular movements.

U.S. imperialism was taken by surprise by the 9/11 attacks in 2001, which came amidst a large and youthful anti-globalization movement. For a short time afterward, while the George W. Bush administration was reeling, there was an opportunity to speak and educate people about the crimes of the U.S. abroad.

Then came a crushing wave of repression and propaganda. The ruling class took over and dominated the narrative, marginalizing and ostracizing the struggle of the oppressed, and plotted new "endless wars." The anti-globalization movement was crushed under its weight.

Similarly, during the Barack Obama administration, the Occupy Wall Street movement took the bosses and the government by surprise with its rapid spread to every nook and cranny of the country. Many of today's most dedicated organizers got their start with Occupy. But when the capitalist state got coordinated and cracked down, the

movement was quickly dispersed.

What's different this time is that, despite the vicious backlash and very real threat of violence, people are still in the streets—and continue to come into the streets with each new racist police murder, from Atlanta to Kenosha, Los Angeles to Rochester, N.Y., and beyond.

The refusal of the people, especially young people, to be silenced is encouraging. But a spontaneous protest movement is not an unlimited resource, especially when the forces of the capitalist state are mobilized against it.

Unity and coordination needed

The urgent need is for greater unity and coordination of people's organizations for the coming battles with the state and the fascists. This includes developing strategies for self-defense, new tactics to escalate the struggle in the streets and workplaces, and alternative forms of power to challenge the right of the presidency, the Congress, state legislatures and city councils to make the rules. This is true regardless of the outcome of November's presidential election.

The broad movement in defense of Black lives needs to prepare for whatever may come in the next several months. The least likely scenario is a sweeping Biden victory, a peaceful Trump concession and a return to pre-2017 governmental norms, as bad as those were.

Police and fascist repression at polling places; massive voter suppression; interference with the Post Office and mail-in voting; manipulation of the undemocratic Electoral College system; fascist violence in the streets; an "October surprise" war against Venezuela, Iran or China; even a coup involving the military or other state forces—are all possibilities that revolutionaries must reckon with.

Underlying the volatile instability at the top is the cataclysmic crisis of capitalism, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created the greatest economic crisis for the workers and oppressed since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

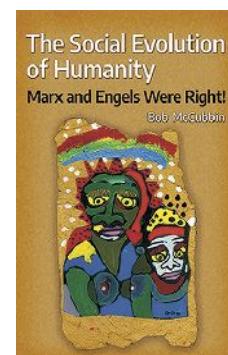
Now is the time for bold initiatives, careful planning, and building class-conscious, anti-racist organs of self defense. Time is short, but the human material exists and conditions are ripe for taking the first steps onto the path of revolutionary change. Let's get to work. □



BLACK AUGUST 1619-2019
commemorates 400 years of Black freedom struggle

This book examines the construction of a racial capitalist venture—slavery—where the histories of African, Native and working people overlapped. tinyurl.com/vn3qvn5

- ♦ Historical series by Matsemela-Ali Odom
- ♦ Contributions by Gloria Verdieu
- ♦ Carl Muhammad ♦ Zola Fish ♦ Mary Lou Finley
- ♦ Dennis Childs ♦ Eusi Kwayana ♦ Mumia Abu-Jamal
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The Social Evolution of Humanity
Marx and Engels were right! Bob McCubbin
Kindle or paperback

This study augments Frederick Engels' 'Origin of the Family, Private Property & the State,' focusing on social/sexual relations, in particular, the changing social status of women. McCubbin is the author of 'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.' First published in 1976, during the first flush of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin offers a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.



Vigil for Randall 'Ka Randy' Echanis, chair of the Anakpawis Party-List in the Philippines on Aug. 13.

SLL PHOTO: BILL DORES

Baltimore protest hits Pence, racist attacks on voting rights

By Bayani

When Vice President Mike Pence announced an Aug. 26 visit to Fort McHenry in Baltimore, the Peoples Power Assembly called for a protest march and car caravan with the message, "Trump/Pence out of Baltimore!"

Pence chose the location to give his acceptance speech after being nominated for a second term as vice president during the Republican National Convention. More than 20 cars gathered in South Baltimore to begin the first leg of the protest.

At Fort McHenry, demonstrators were blockaded and confronted by the Secret Service. Alongside the Baltimore Police Department, the Secret Service forcibly redirected the caravan away from where Pence was speaking. One organizer reported being flipped off by Baltimore cops while leading chants.

The caravan and march took place just three days after police in Kenosha, Wis., shot Jacob Blake in the back in front of his three children, paralyzing him from the waist down. Marchers demanded justice for Blake and an end to racist police terror.

At the opening rally at Douglas Homes, a public housing project in East Baltimore, protesters sent a strong solidarity message from Baltimore City to Jacob Blake, his family and loved ones, and the demonstrators in Kenosha being attacked by the cops and right wingers.

Longtime activist the Rev. Annie Chambers exclaimed: "We want Jacob Blake and his family and all the



'We want Jacob Blake and his family and all the people in Kenosha to know that we are behind them and we're going to continue to fight!'

— Rev. Annie Chambers speaking at Baltimore protest on Aug. 26.

Left, Jacob Blake, shot in the back seven times by a Kenosha, Wis., cop on Aug. 23 remains hospitalized — paralyzed from the waist down and in constant pain.

people in Kenosha to know that we are behind them and we're going to continue to fight!"

Rev. Chambers remarked on the outright racism of Trump and Pence, including Trump's 2019 comments calling Baltimore "rat-infested."

She described the administration's attack on the U.S. Postal Service as an attack on poor people: "Mail is slowing down in working-class and poor people's communities. The mail boxes are being taken up in our communities."

Trump admitted that he would sabotage the post office to prevent universal mail-in voting amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The march and caravan then headed to a post office to show support for postal workers, demanding, "Shut down racist voter suppression, not the post office." Marchers stopped in front of a loading dock where workers were loading trucks and gave a brief rap showing support for their jobs.

Peoples Power Assembly organizers explained that the White House attack on the post office is an attack on Black and Brown people, poor and oppressed people, and elderly and disabled people.

Organizer Andre Powell told the group that these attacks were another attempt at union busting. There are

several unions that represent postal workers, including the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers.

The caravan and march were well-received by the people along the way, even in the neighborhoods in South Baltimore around Fort McHenry, which, 40 years ago, were working-class neighborhoods. Now they are overtaken by gentrification and overpriced luxury condos. Residents left their homes to film the demonstration and raise their fists in solidarity.

Baltimore made it clear: Black lives matter here, and racist rats Trump and Pence are not welcome. □

Never forget Katrina — Black lives matter!



New Orleans residents on the roof of a house surrounded by water, Sept. 1, 2005. Much of the suffering, death and destruction was preventable.

By Sharon Black

Struggle-La Lucha salutes the people of New Orleans and the Katrina diaspora!

It has been 15 years since Hurricane Katrina struck Louisiana, beginning on Aug. 29, 2005. Over 1,800 mostly Black and poor people lost their lives when the storm struck and the levees broke. The unfolding disaster created a permanent diaspora. It destroyed whole communities and the people who lived in them. Much of the suffering, death and destruction was preventable.

In the immediate aftermath, bridges were blocked and hundreds of people were turned back from leaving the city. At the Gretna Bridge, witnesses reported that police fired over the heads of desperate, fleeing people.

On Sept. 4, New Orleans police shot and killed two unarmed victims and badly wounded four others on the Danziger Bridge.

Prisoners were abandoned by prison officers who evacuated themselves. Close to 1,000 prisoners at the Orleans Parish Prison, a third of whom were awaiting trial and not convicted of any crime, were left to fend for themselves. When generators failed, they waited in total darkness in chest-high water with no food or water for four days. Some 517 were never found.

Katrina will remain in history as an indictment of capitalism and the white supremacy inherent in the system.

It's important to point out that during this crisis, when people were literally drowning from what can only be called genocide, U.S. imperialism was also conducting a genocidal war against the Iraqi people. The war directly diverted resources that could have been used to help hurricane victims.

When the 256th Infantry Brigade of the Louisiana National Guard returned from Iraq on Sept. 8, 2005, 80 percent had lost their homes, and many, their families.

Cuba, under the direction of President Fidel Castro, offered the assistance of 1,586 doctors and medical personnel, while Venezuela offered oil shipments. It was the founding of the Henry Reeves International Medical Brigade, which has provided such vital assistance to the world during this year's COVID-19 pandemic.

U.S. President George W. Bush, who was deeply engaged in the war against Iraq, turned down this assistance.

This is a salute to the working-class people of New Orleans and the entire region, whose enduring spirit is reflected in the uprising that is sweeping the country today under the banner of "Black Lives Matter." May we never forget! □

NBA and WNBA players strike to demand justice for Jacob Blake

By Steven Ceci

On Aug. 26, National Basketball Association and Women's National Basketball Association players went on strike in an act of solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, after a 29-year-old Black man, Jacob Blake, was shot seven times in the back at point-blank range by a white police officer in Kenosha, Wis.

Kenosha is 40 miles south of Milwaukee, Wisconsin's largest city and home of the Milwaukee Bucks NBA team.

Video showed the unarmed Jacob Blake shot as he attempted to enter his car. Three of his children were in the back seat and witnessed the shooting in horror. Blake's father reported that his son, now paralyzed from the waist down, is still fighting for his life.

The outrageous racist shooting of Blake by a white cop visibly disturbed Milwaukee Bucks guard George Hill at his post-game press conference in Orlando, Fla., on Aug. 24, after the Bucks won game four of the NBA Playoffs and took a three-games-to-one lead over the Orlando Magic.

Instead of celebrating his team's victory, Hill said, "I don't think we should be talking about basketball today. We should talk about the Blake family and what's going on. It's devastating and basketball shouldn't even be on our mind right now. We're thankful for the win, but none of this really matters.

"First of all, we shouldn't even have come to this damn place to be honest," Hill said. "Coming here just took all the focal points off what the issues are. But we're here. It is what it is. We can't do anything from right here. But definitely when it's all settled, some things need to be done. This world has to change. Our police department has to change. We as a society have to change. Right now, we're not seeing any of that. Lives are being taken as we speak, day in and day out. There's no consequence or accountability for it. That's what has to change."

Then, on Aug. 25, 17-year-old self-professed Blue Lives Matter fanatic Kyle Rittenhouse shot three

anti-racists who were protesting in Kenosha, killing two of them. Rittenhouse was only taken into custody the next day — across the state line in Illinois, alive and unharmed. Rittenhouse reportedly attended a pro-Trump rally in Des Moines, Iowa, in January.

This was the straw that broke the camel's back and jump-started the wildcat strike of professional basketball players.

The decision by Milwaukee Bucks players to strike quickly spread to all the NBA teams in the playoffs.

WNBA players had already decided to walk off the courts. "Wednesday night, before joining the Milwaukee Bucks in strike of their scheduled games, the WNBA's Washington Mystics arrived on the court wearing shirts that together spelled the name of Jacob Blake. ... On the reverse side of the shirts were drawn seven bullet holes, lined in dark red."

The actions by both WNBA and NBA players quickly spread to other professional sports athletes across the country, who walked off courts, stadiums and fields, stopping over a dozen professional games in basketball, baseball, tennis and soccer.

Tennis star Naomi Osaka, of Haitian and Japanese descent, went on strike during the semifinals of the Western & Southern Open in New York, causing the tournament to be delayed.

"Before I am an athlete, I am a Black woman," Osaka wrote in a Twitter post. "And as a Black woman I feel as though there are much more important matters at hand that need immediate attention, rather than watching me play tennis. I don't expect anything drastic to happen with me not playing, but if I can get a conversation started in a majority white sport I consider that a step in the right direction."

In the spirit of Kaepernick

These solidarity strikes are one more expression of the widespread and growing anger towards police terror and systemic racism that has driven the movement in the streets and now is motivating labor actions.

The solidarity labor action by professional athletes for Black lives



WNBA's Washington Mystics took a knee wearing T-shirts with seven bullet holes on the back to protest the police shooting of Jacob Blake. Then they walked off the court, refusing to play.

came four years to the day after football star Colin Kaepernick of the San Francisco 49ers first took a knee in protest of structural racism, inequality and the state-sanctioned murder of Black people at the hands of police.

For over a month, NBA athletes have been living and playing in the "bubble" at Disney World in Orlando — a protected complex to house players and prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the basketball season.

This was part of an effort, under pressure from wealthy team owners, but initially supported by many players, to restart the sports season in the midst of the pandemic.

However, since the release of the video of Jacob Blake's shooting, tensions have been mounting inside the bubble among players outraged at the continued violence inflicted on Black people by the police and the racial injustices entrenched in U.S. society.

There have been many discussions about whether the season should continue and what actions players could take to protest this latest act of police terror. On Aug. 26, these tensions reached a boiling point when the Bucks refused to take the court.

In a statement released by the team, players explained their reasons for boycotting the game: "Over the last few days in our home state of Wisconsin, we've seen the horren-

dous video of Jacob Blake being shot in the back seven times by a police officer in Kenosha, and the additional shooting of protesters. ... We are calling for justice for Jacob Blake and demand the officers be held accountable."

Four minutes before the start of the game, players on the Orlando Magic followed suit, leaving the court and boycotting the game in solidarity with their fellow players from the Bucks.

According to ESPN, soon after they announced their refusal to play, the Bucks were on the phone from their locker room with Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul and Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes to present their demands.

The players may be subject to retaliation from both management and the NBA for refusing to play, because their actions violate a clause in their contract against striking. Though the team is calling the action a "boycott," they risk a five-million-dollar fine for not showing up to the game.

The strike by the NBA and WNBA has reverberated around the sports world and will continue to reverberate throughout society as a whole. Let's not forget that we are in the middle of a pandemic and all the rules we are accustomed to no longer apply. ■

A salute to the heroic Attica Rebellion

By Sharon Black

"We are men! We are not beasts, and we do not intend to be driven or beaten as such!"

— Elliot L.D. Barkley, a 21-year-old leader of the Attica Rebellion who was murdered by the state. He was placed in Attica on a minor parole violation and was scheduled to be released approximately a week after the rebellion broke out.

On Sept. 9, 1971, approximately 1,500 prisoners in Cell Block D seized the Attica Correctional Facility in upstate New York, after submitting a 27-point manifesto in an attempt to address the torturous conditions inside the prison.

At the time of the uprising, 2,300 prisoners were sandwiched into a prison built for 1,600. White supremacy behind the walls was evident everywhere, from how prisoners were housed to brutal work assignments.

Prisoners were allowed one shower per week and one roll of toilet paper a month. They labored for five hours a day and were paid between 20 cents and \$1 for the entire day. For 14 to 16 hours, they were locked in tiny 6-foot by 9-foot cells.

A revolutionary mood

It is critical to understand the broader historical context in which this rebellion took place. How could people who were so beaten down,

whose lives hung in the balance at the whim of a guard, take such heroic action?

Outside of the jails and also inside many prisons, a battle was raging for the national liberation of Black, Puerto Rican, Indigenous and Chicanx people. A new revolutionary mood was sweeping the country to end all kinds of oppression.

Millions of people were protesting the Vietnam War. The women's liberation movement was beginning to blossom. Just two years later, the occupation of Wounded Knee by the American Indian Movement (AIM) took place.

The McKay Commission (New York State Special Commission on Attica)

later commented: "With the exception of Indian massacres in the late 19th century, the State Police assault which ended the four-day prison uprising was the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War."

Organizing behind the walls

Serious organizing was going on inside Attica prior to the rebellion. Many of the groups outside the prison were reflected inside, including the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, the Nation of Islam and the Five Percenters. Many had study groups. The Attica Liberation Faction developed in this period.

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Trump lays groundwork to steal election

By Gary Wilson

The newly unleashed federal police force entered the Portland, Ore., area on Sept. 3 and assassinated anti-fascist activist and Black Lives Matter supporter Michael Reinoehl. Attorney General William Barr triumphantly announced: "Agitator removed."

In the U.S., we've been told, one of the marks of democracy is that there is no national police force. The only police are employed by state and local governments, not the federal government. That excludes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which claims it is not a national police force because it is confined to enforcing violations of federal laws, while most laws in the U.S. are state laws.

However, since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, established after 9/11 under President George W. Bush, federal security forces often wear uniforms that identify them as "police." These are the secret, unidentified federal police being used against the people of major working-class cities where Black Lives Matter protests have been ongoing since the Minneapolis police murdered George Floyd on May 25, 2020.

Could Trump use these paramilitary forces to stage a coup d'état if he loses the Nov. 3 presidential elections?

Trump has hinted that he might do that. When asked by Fox News anchor Chris Wallace whether he would accept the results of the presidential election, Trump answered: "It depends. I think mail-in voting is going to rig the election."

Pressed on whether he will accept the results of the November election, Trump responded, "I have to see."

After the November 2016 election, when he lost the popular vote by almost three million votes to Hillary Clinton, Trump insisted that he had really won the popular vote and that Clinton only appeared to win because "unauthorized" immigrants had voted. Factcheck.org says there is no "evidence of wrongdoing, and numerous studies have found such voter fraud is virtually nonexistent."

Trump's current election strategy counts on a turnout of "populist" racist voters combined with extensive voter suppression to ensure his reelection in the Electoral College. The Electoral College is an undemocratic institution that was created to ensure the dominance of the slaveholders in the U.S. and continues to do something like that today. (See "The Electoral College's Racist Origins," The Atlantic, Nov. 17, 2019)

The state and the president

In "The State and Revolution," the Russian revolutionary leader and Marxist political theorist Vladimir Lenin wrote that the capitalist state is an institution of organized violence that is used by the ruling class of a country to maintain its rule. "State power," Lenin said, is rooted in "special bodies of armed men having prisons, etc., at their command."

The capitalist state machine is the legislative bodies, the prisons, the standing armies, National Guard and state militias, police and the government agencies. This is not

the ruling class, but the instruments used by the capitalist class to maintain its rule.

Throughout the history of the state — from ancient slave states to medieval monarchies to bourgeois republics — there has been a tendency to personify the state power in the personality of an individual. In monarchies, it was claimed that the king was the living god on earth. In Japan, the emperor was considered a god right down to the defeat of the Empire of Japan in 1945. In current times, a president or to a lesser extent the prime minister personifies the state.

In the U.S., it is the president who is chief of state and personifies state power. The president personifies the state as the leader elected in a democratic election. However, in the U.S., which is a republic but not a democracy, no president has ever been directly elected by popular vote. Instead, the president is chosen by the Electoral College.

U.S. presidential elections are, by design, complicated procedures. The presidency is a national position, but the elections are organized by the individual states. According to current law and the Constitution as amended, all U.S. citizens who have reached the age of 18 and who have not been convicted of a felony — the exact rules vary state by state — are eligible to vote for the presidential electors on Nov. 3, 2020.

These electors form the Electoral College and are sworn to vote for a specific presidential candidate, with variations among the states as to how this is exactly decided. After the election, the electors will assemble on Dec. 14, 2020. That's the Electoral College and the electors are expected, but not constitutionally bound, to vote for the candidates they represent. The electors cast ballots and pick a president. Immediately after this vote, the Electoral College is dissolved.

Finally, the Electoral College results are reported to Congress, where the Electoral College votes are to be counted and certified at a joint session on Jan. 6, 2021. That is when the victorious candidate formally becomes the president-elect.

That's the law. But there are also unofficial election rules.

One unofficial rule is that only a Democrat or a Republican can be president. The laws protect the status of the two parties as official, putting them automatically on every ballot and restricting or prohibiting any other parties. This limit on parties in the U.S. makes it the least diverse of all the major capitalist countries, where normally, there are many political parties.

Hillary Clinton told to concede before results were known

Another unofficial rule is that the losing candidate in the presidential election, whether Democrat or Republican, is expected to concede as soon as possible to the victorious candidate. This is expected to occur on election night, when the TV networks "call" the election based on computer predictions of the results.

This occurs weeks before the Electoral College formally elects the

president and two months before Congress certifies the result. Usually, the actual election of the president by the Electoral College is barely mentioned in the media.

In 2016, when it was predicted that Trump would carry the Electoral College, President Barack Obama called Hillary Clinton and demanded she concede the election to Donald Trump. "You need to concede," Obama told Clinton early on election night.

Since Clinton was widely expected to win, there was some concern that she might resist or at least postpone conceding. This could have sparked a broader movement to keep Trump out of the White House, perhaps because he had lost the popular vote.

When Obama called Clinton demanding that she concede, the result of the popular vote wasn't known. But at 1:30 a.m., the TV networks were predicting that Trump had won the Electoral College vote. Under the U.S. electoral system, that's all that matters. It turned out that Clinton had gotten almost three million more votes than Trump. But the electors are chosen not on a national but a state basis, and on this basis, electors pledged to Trump were in the majority.

In theory, Clinton could have demanded that the GOP-majority Electoral College bow to the popular vote, which showed that the majority did not want the racist far-right Trump to be president. Also, the popular vote was extremely close in three states — Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania — where Trump had won by extremely narrow margins and pre-election polls had indicated that Clinton would prevail.

There was also the problem of widespread suppression of the Black vote. Racist voter suppression was restored by the Supreme Court in a 2013 decision that voided much of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was the first time that "one person, one vote" was made law in the U.S.

Clinton could have demanded recounts in these states, but didn't. Jill Stein of the Green Party demanded recounts in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin and raised more than \$7 million to fund it, but ultimately, the effort was blocked by the courts.

However, Obama and the Democratic Party rejected such a challenge from the very beginning. Within a few hours, Clinton had already bowed to the overwhelming pressure and conceded the election to Trump. The media began to refer to Trump as the "president-elect," though from a legal point of view he was not yet the president-elect. This killed any attempt to challenge Trump's right to assume office, which he had no democratic claim to.

But the U.S. Constitution was written by and for slaveholders. In the words of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the Constitution and its many undemocratic features legalized slavery. At the time, there was no bourgeois democracy anywhere in the world and there were no plans for democracy. In the Federalist Papers, democracy was dismissed as mob rule — the mob being poor people and farmers — and slaves were dismissed as prop-

erty, not people.

Trump had the slaveholders' Constitution behind him in his claim to the presidency.

What will Trump do?

So far in the election campaign, there have been few if any differences in domestic and foreign policy between Trump and the extremely conservative Joe Biden. It seems improbable that Trump could find enough support to end more than 230 years of uninterrupted constitutional rule. It is this long period that gives the U.S. government its legitimacy.

The ruling U.S. capitalist class, dominated by the billionaires for Trump, may not support an open Trump coup, which would also put an end to the government's legitimacy. After all, Biden wouldn't be a real change. Biden's primary campaign promises are to avoid Trump's extreme racist rhetoric at home while continuing to target U.S. "enemies" such as China, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba and Zimbabwe. The essence of U.S. imperialism and its policies would remain unchanged.

However, Trump could get support for stealing the election as long as a pretext for constitutional rule is maintained. Indeed, this is an old tradition in the U.S. Tammany Hall, the corrupt Democratic machine that dominated New York City politics from the early 19th century until the 1960s, was notorious for the slogan, "Vote early and vote often." Chicago, also home of a corrupt Democratic machine, was infamous for its "Chicago Methods" of stealing elections.

It is widely believed that John F. Kennedy won the presidency in 1960 only because the Chicago machine — Mayor Richard J. Daley and the Chicago Mob — managed to steal enough votes to swing the state of Illinois vote from Republican Richard Nixon to Democrat Kennedy.

Republican Nixon conceded the election of 1960 that Democrat John F. Kennedy had stolen from him, just as Democrats Al Gore in 2000 and Hillary Clinton in 2016 conceded elections that were stolen from them.

For a hundred years, from the end of the Civil War until 1968, the "Jim Crow" system of apartheid in the U.S. was built in no small measure by election-stealing by the Democratic Party, achieved through the illegal and unconstitutional suppression of the Black vote.

There are many ways that U.S. elections are undemocratic compared to most capitalist countries. One way is that elections are held on a workday, not on a holiday or a weekend, as they are in all other countries. This makes it difficult if not impossible for most workers to vote.

Exhausted by work and not inspired by the candidates, most workers choose not to stand in line for hours to vote.

Voting by mail is safe and democratic

An attempt to overcome this limitation on voting has been the introduction of mail-in voting. Under this system, a ballot is mailed to eligible voters — either all voters or on request to individual voters. This way,

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Billionaires for Trump would support stealing the election as long as a pretext for constitutional rule is maintained. Indeed, this is an old tradition in the U.S.

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voters have time to mark the ballot and then mail it in. They have more time to consider the issues and are less likely to make a mistake in marking the ballot.

This year, the still-rising COVID-19 pandemic means that if you stand in line to vote in a "booth" on Nov. 3, you will not only experience an inconvenience, you will be risking your life and the lives of your loved ones.

It appears that the majority of U.S. voters prefer Joe Biden as a "lesser evil" to the widely hated Donald Trump. They might be willing to go out of their way or vote after an exhausting working day to help get Trump out of the White House. But how many will be willing to risk their lives to do this? And of those who are willing to risk their own lives, how many are willing to risk the lives of family members if they catch COVID-19 while standing in line to vote?

The Republicans and Trump are betting that many potential Biden voters will not be willing to risk the lives of themselves and/or their loved ones simply to vote for Biden.

Trump, therefore, has made a special issue of opposing voting by mail. He claims that voting by mail enables widespread "fraud." In reality, he means voting by people of color.

Trump threatened to sue the state of Nevada, whose legislature, now dominated by Democrats, has passed a vote-by-mail law. Trump even claims that if voting by mail is allowed, not a single Republican will ever again be elected to any office.

Though exaggerated, there is some truth in that. Under present U.S. political conditions where there is low socialist class consciousness in the working class, it has been a



Aug. 26 protest at Ft. McHenry, Md., where Vice President Pence was appearing, demands end to attacks on Postal Service and voting rights.

Photo: SLL

rule of thumb that if voter turnout is high the Democrat wins, and if it is low the Republican wins. Many elections are won by the Republicans because potential Democratic voters, though more numerous than Republican voters, are not inspired enough to bother to vote.

Trump has also stepped up his attack on the U.S. Postal Service with moves toward privatization. The attacks on the post office are significant because voting by mail is the only democratic and safe way to vote this year. Under the new postmaster-general, Trump appointee Louis DeJoy, mail deliveries have slowed considerably, according to the postal workers' unions. Also, many mailboxes and mail-sorting machines have been removed.

While public outrage has forced DeJoy to promise not to remove any more mailboxes and sorting equipment, he has indicated he will not replace those that have already been

removed. If there is widespread voting by mail despite the obstacles, reporting of the November election results will be delayed. This increases the chances that the results will be contested, especially if Trump loses.

That's where Trump's statements come in that he may not "accept the results" because they will be fake, especially if voting by mail is allowed. The results, Trump said, will "be rigged." By "rigging," Trump means more people who are legally entitled to vote are voting.

Who will concede?

The unofficial rule is that a presidential candidate becomes the "president-elect" when his or her opponent concedes. However, once the candidate does "concede," it becomes hard to build a movement in the streets or elsewhere to contest a stolen election. Richard Nixon in

1960, Al Gore in 2000 and Hillary Clinton in 2016 all put the stability of the state power ahead of the rules of democracy and the legalities that govern U.S. elections.

Trump hints that he will not concede the election even if the broadcast networks project Biden as the winner in the Electoral College. Instead, he may declare that the election was rigged.

Perhaps Trump will challenge the result in the courts, including the Supreme Court. Remember, the Republican-controlled Supreme Court reversed the results of the 2000 elections by handing the White House to defeated Republican candidate George W. Bush. Could they do so again in 2020?

If Trump does not concede, according to previous practice, the media will not declare Biden the "president-elect." Then, Trump's reactionary-racist base may rally in the streets, perhaps even in armed demonstrations, demanding the courts declare Trump the winner.

By allowing the elections of 2000 and 2016 to be stolen from them without a fight, the Democrats have made it much easier for Trump to steal the election in 2020.

Trump has good reason to believe that Biden would quickly concede the election to him if Trump has any pretext at all for claiming he won the Electoral College. If Biden concedes the election, the media will declare Trump "reelected," and he will be sworn in for his second term as the unchallenged "legitimate" president of the United States on Jan. 20, 2021.

If Biden doesn't concede, it opens the possibility for a broad movement to "vote in the streets" and stop Trump from stealing the election. □

The heroic Attica Rebellion

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In July 1971, the Attica Liberation Faction presented a list of 27 demands to Commissioner of Corrections Russell Oswald and Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. This list of demands was based on the Folsom Prisoners' Manifesto crafted by Chicanx prisoner Martin Sousa in support of a November 1970 prisoner strike in California.

Then, on Aug. 21, 1971, Black Panther leader George Jackson was gunned down by racist guards in California's San Quentin prison. Prisoners all across the country, including several hundred in Attica, went on hunger strikes. The assassination of George Jackson became the glue that allowed the Attica prisoners to unite across religions, nationalities and political factions.

The prisoners' Paris Commune

On Sept. 9, Attica prisoners seized the facility. They took corrections officers hostage to ensure that their protest would be heard, since they had received no response to their manifesto from the corrections

commissioner or governor.

While the events that took place on Sept. 9 were spontaneous and began as a clash between guards and prisoners, the level of organizing and what became a full-scale uprising were the result of the revolutionary leadership and consciousness that had grown during this period.

What's remarkable is the high degree of organization and discipline of the thousands of prisoners who took part. They elected a central committee, which rotated chairpeople; they organized a 33-person observers' committee, which included not only attorney William Kunstler, Black Panther Bobby Seale, New York State Assemblymember Arthur O. Eve, and representatives of the Young Lords, but also Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee.

The first time the working class took power into its own hands was the insurrection known as the Paris Commune of 1871. The communards canceled rents, recognized women's rights, abolished child labor, took over workplaces and set up their own form of government. The commune served as a historical example



On Sept. 9, 1971, prisoners seized the Attica Correctional Facility in New York State, after submitting a manifesto addressing the torturous conditions inside the prison.

to many revolutionary socialists of the potential for a workers' state. It was ultimately put down in blood, but the lessons remain.

A century later, on Sept. 13, 1971, Gov. Rockefeller ordered the storming of Attica prison. With helicopters flying overhead, close to 1,000 state troopers, national guard troops and prison guards fired into the yard, killing 39 people and wounding 85 in what can only be described as a massacre. This took place in just 15 minutes.

The press screamed that the 10 captive guards who died had their throats slit. But autopsies showed that all 10 had been shot to death by Rockefeller's storm troopers.

What happened in the immediate aftermath of the slaughter is too painful to fully describe. Prisoners were stripped naked, beaten, made to run through gauntlets of guards and brutally tortured. Guards stormed into the yard chanting "white power."

A battle cry for liberation

Nevertheless, the Attica uprising and the massacre stirred prisoners everywhere. It's estimated that 200,000 prisoners protested and held strikes in its aftermath. The number of prison rebellions doubled.

It continues to serve as a beacon today for those fighting against racism and mass incarceration and for workers' rights everywhere. □

Don't blame Russia for Trump

By Stephen Millies

Russia didn't put Donald Trump in the White House. Large sections of the U.S. billionaire class did, with help from the FBI.

Yet most of the corporate media convicted the Russian Federation of the crime. The country is now being accused of using Facebook and Twitter to help reelect Trump.

The New York Times claims that Russia's Internet Research Agency is "targeting Americans with misinformation." What's the real story?

- It was the U.S. Supreme Court that gutted the Voting Rights Act —not Russia.
- Russia didn't create the Electoral College that selected Donald Trump to be president despite Hillary Clinton receiving nearly 3 million more votes. It was the slave master James Madison who devised the Electoral College to protect slavery.
- The capitalist media gave Trump nearly \$3 billion of free publicity. NBC made this racist clown a nationally known figure by giving him his own TV show.
- Eleven days before the 2016 election, then-FBI Director James Comey sent a letter to Congress virtually accusing Hillary Clinton of crimes involving her email server. In 2020, the police state apparatus is solidly behind Trump in trying to crush the Black Lives Matter movement.
- While some billionaires oppose Trump, the day after the 2016 election, the Dow Jones Industrial Average shot up 272 points. No billionaires refused Trump's tax cuts for the super rich.

The campaign against Russia diverted the struggle against Trump. It plays into the hands of Pentagon generals, who want to occupy Russia's 6 million square miles. There's



Time Magazine cover from 1996 celebrates U.S. interference in Russia's elections.

a real danger of a U.S. war against Russia and China.

Instead of allegations concerning Ukraine and Russia, Trump should have been impeached for racism. That's what Texas representative and Black Congressional Caucus member Al Green advocated.

World's biggest liar points at Russia

It's the CIA that drenches the world with lies. Radio Free Europe was a CIA front. So was Radio Liberty, aimed at the Soviet Union.

The Pentagon spent at least \$5.5 trillion between 1940 and 1996 on nuclear weapons aimed at the Soviet Union. That money should have been spent on reparations for Black and Indigenous people.

The socialist Soviet Union's downfall was an immense tragedy for poor and working people everywhere, just as Reconstruction's overthrow was for Black people in the U.S.

U.S. capitalists continued to meddle after the Soviet Union's breakup in 1991. U.S. election consultants bragged that they helped reelect Russian President Boris Yeltsin in 1996.

The CIA's payroll was filled with lying propaganda experts. Among them were David Atlee Phillips and E. Howard Hunt.

Both of them worked to overthrow Guatemala's democratically elected president, Jacobo Árbenz, in 1954 on behalf of United Fruit. In the decades following the CIA's Operation PBSUCCESS, 200,000 people, overwhelmingly Indigenous, were murdered by death squads.

Phillips would later play a key role in President John F. Kennedy's assassination, while Hunt went to jail for President Richard Nixon's Watergate burglary.

Other U.S. propaganda assets include Voice of America, Radio Free Asia and Radio Martí, beamed at Cuba. In 2018, the U.S. Agency for Global Media spent \$803 million on these lie machines.

CIA executive Frank Wisner called the agency's propaganda efforts a "Mighty Wurlitzer" organ. The CIA even operated a daily newspaper in Rome, the Daily American.

Operation Mockingbird was the CIA's influence program aimed at the United States. Dozens of newspapers, magazines and broadcasting companies willingly participated in this illegal program.

Among them were Time, ABC, CBS, NBC and the New York Times — the same outfits that are now attacking "Russian propaganda." Journalist Carl Bernstein, who helped expose the Watergate scandal, estimates 400 editors and reporters wrote stories

supporting U.S. military intervention and coups through this program.

Directing Operation Mockingbird was Cord Meyer, whose wealthy family developed the swanky Forest Hills neighborhood in Queens, N.Y.

Mary Pinchot Meyer — Cord Meyer's ex-partner — was murdered in what many people believe was a death connected to JFK's assassination. The U.S. government attempted to frame a Black man, Raymond Crump, for the crime, but his lawyer, Dovey Roundtree, secured an acquittal from the jury.

Denying El Mozote massacre

The lying continued years after Operation Mockingbird was exposed.

The Washington Post and New York Times capitulated to the Reagan administration after reporting about the El Mozote massacre in El Salvador. Around 1,000 people, including hundreds of children, were killed by U.S.-backed forces there on Dec. 11, 1981.

The Wall Street Journal called the articles written by Times reporter Raymond Bonner "communist propaganda." Abe Rosenthal, the Times' managing editor, then transferred Bonner from El Salvador to the paper's financial desk in New York.

Alma Guillermoprieto, who wrote about the massacre for the Washington Post, was reassigned to cover the Maryland suburbs.

Last year, Congressperson Ilhan Omar righteously questioned Elliot Abrams about his role in the coverup. Like the Wall Street Journal, Abrams labeled reports of the massacre as "communist propaganda."

War criminal Abrams, who coordinated death squads for Reagan, is now Trump's point person in trying to overthrow Venezuela's elected president, Nicolás Maduro Moros.

Our enemies are in the Pentagon and corporate boardrooms — not in Moscow. □

Kevin Zeese, ¡presente!

By Sharon Black

Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido send our heartfelt condolences to Kevin Zeese's family, loved ones and friends, especially his life partner Margaret Flowers. His sudden death on Sept. 6 is a loss for the entire anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement.

Zeese and Flowers co-founded Popular Resistance. Zeese will also be remembered for his sacrifices and the role he played in the Embassy Protection Collective in 2019.

When the U.S. government under Donald Trump was poised to illegally seize the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C., and hand it over to its puppet Juan Guaidó, who declared himself president of Venezuela, Zeese put his body on the line and became a protector of the embassy and international law. This was in the immediate aftermath of a failed U.S. coup against democratically-elected President Nicolás Maduro.

For 37 days, Zeese, along with other protectors both inside the embassy and in the streets, faced off with the Department of Homeland Security and all sorts of other vile, racist, homophobic, violent right-wing Guaidó supporters and police agencies. The state tried to starve the protectors, then turned off electricity and, at one point, even water. But it took the forcible removal and arrests of the four protectors who remained inside, including Zeese, to end the standoff.

The Embassy Protectors faced heavy federal charges. After a major defense campaign was mounted, the U.S. government was forced to drop the charges on all four defendants.

This became a pivotal part of the struggle in the United States to defend the sovereignty of Venezuela and to fight against imperialist war.

Before his sudden death, Zeese was working on a program around the case of imprisoned journalist Julian Assange, whose extradition trial begins this week.



We can best remember him by redoubling our efforts to end capitalist exploitation and imperialist war.

Kevin Zeese, rest in power! □

Kevin Zeese and Margaret Flowers at the Venezuelan Embassy in 2019.

PHOTO: POPULAR RESISTANCE

Congress of the Peoples of the East resonates 100 years later

By Bayani

For a moment, let's travel back in time exactly 100 years to Baku, a city in what was known then as the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. Somewhere in the city, nearly 1,900 people gathered in a crowded, noisy hall for eight days to conduct the Congress of the Peoples of the East.

Look around the assembly and we'll see people representing not only the revolutionary working-class organizations of the capitalist and imperialist nations, but also revolutionaries representing national liberation struggles from the colonial and semicolonial world.

Some of them may look ragged or in grief from their travels to Baku. The road between their countries and Azerbaijan was perilous. After all, most of the globe was gripped in the ravages of World War I only two years earlier, and the first successful working-class revolution had seized state power from Tsarist Russia a year before that.

The world's imperialist powers were eager to contain this type of threat to their power. Britain had established a military blockade of Soviet Russia and used it to impede travel to Baku — in one instance killing two delegates and injuring several others when British warplanes attacked a ship traveling from Iran. The Armenian and Georgian governments, not yet overthrown by working-class forces, outright banned attendance of the conference. Delegates from these countries crossed borders in secret.

The congress was called after a decision by the Second Congress of the Communist International, a worldwide coalition of communist parties and organizations from all over the world, for the purpose of building unity and solidarity between the working-class movements of the "West" with the anti-colonial national liberation movements of the "East."

Achievements of the congress

Eight days of thorough political discussion yielded the comprehensive Manifesto of the Congress of the Peoples of the East, which laid out the most important unities of the gathering:

- In the spirit of ending the power of the rich over the workers but also the power of some peoples over others, the congress urged the workers of the imperialist countries to unite with the peasants and other oppressed classes of the peoples of the East.
- The congress thoroughly and ruthlessly condemned the British Empire and its presence and schemes in India, Turkey, Persia (now known as Iran), Mesopotamia and Arabia (areas now roughly corresponding to most of Iraq and Kuwait, and parts of Syria and Turkey), Palestine, Egypt, China, Korea, Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia and Eastern Europe.
- The congress presented a thorough analysis of the political economy of British colonialism and the forced migration of the colonized peoples. In short, British imperialist capital, in order to survive, must go beyond its borders to find new investments and new markets, and by



Women delegates attending the conference.

violent seizure of colonies, they own the land, banks and factories of the colonized people. This causes the forced migration of people because they cannot find employment in their own lands.

Most important was the congress's declaration of solidarity and support for the anti-colonial struggles of the colonized world. Though acknowledging that the liberation struggles would not stop at the elimination of foreign imperialists nor the expropriation of land from the big landlords, the congress urged a united front between the oppressed classes of each country and their own national bourgeoisie in order to begin independent economic development.

But until the Soviet system is implemented, in which the working and toiling masses gain the experience of self-government, the anti-colonial revolution will not be complete.

Unprecedented steps in women's liberation

Despite the best efforts of the Communist International, only 55 of the almost 2,000 delegates of the Congress of the Peoples of the East were women. But even this was a leap forward in the fight for women's political rights — two women sat alongside two men in the joint chair committee and three women won elections to the presidium.

Perhaps the most remembered and studied speech of the congress is that of Turkish communist Naciye Hanım, who took the delegates to task: "However sincere and however vigorous your endeavors may be, they will be fruitless unless you summon the women to become real helpers in your work." She insisted on the necessity of women's liberation and political participation to foster genuine revolution.

Hanım rejected a women's movement that aimed for assimilation into feudal or bourgeois life: "The women's movement in the East must not be looked at from the standpoint of those frivolous feminists who are content to see woman's place in social life as that of a delicate plant or an elegant doll."

Hanım also presented a list of demands that not only reflected the development of the women's liberation struggle at the time, but also pushed it forward and provided a model for women's struggles moving forward:



'The Internationale' was performed by the Eastern Orchestra.

- Complete equality of rights;
- Ensuring to women unconditional access to educational and vocational institutions established for men;
- Equality of rights of both parties in marriage;
- Unconditional abolition of polygamy;
- Unconditional admission of women to employment in legislative and administrative institutions;
- Establishment of committees for the rights and protection of women everywhere, in cities, in towns and villages.

Solidarity from workers of imperialist countries

Readers here in the U.S. would be particularly interested in the statements of John Reed, a U.S. revolutionary and journalist.

At the time, the United States was the rising imperialist power of the world, having violently seized Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines as colonies a little over 20 years before. Having reported on and studied these wars, Reed used his speech to warn the congress about the brutal nature of U.S. imperialism:

"You, the peoples of the East, the peoples of Asia, have not yet experienced for yourselves the rule of America. You know and hate the British, French and Italian imperialists, and probably you think that 'free America' will govern better, will liberate the peoples of the colonies, will feed and defend them.

"No. The workers and peasants of the Philippines, the peoples of Central America and the islands of the Caribbean, they know what it means to live under the rule of 'free America.'"

He further exposed the bloody role of U.S. imperialism in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Armenia and, most notably, the Black nation inside the U.S.: "With the purpose of distracting the attention of the American workers from the capitalists, their exploiters, the latter stir up hatred against the Negroes, provoking war between the white and Black races. The Negroes, whom they lawlessly burn alive, are beginning to see that their only hope lies in armed resistance to the white bandits."

John Reed provides a model for the workers of the imperialist countries on the revolutionary attitude to take towards U.S. imperialism and solidarity with the peoples of oppressed nations: "Do not believe the promises of the American capitalists! There is only one road to freedom. Unite with the Russian workers and peasants who have overthrown their capitalists and whose Red Army has beaten the foreign imperialists!"

Vital lessons for anti-imperialists

The theses developed at the Congress of the Peoples of the East were built on the foundation of Lenin's theory of imperialism and to this day provide revolutionaries with a stronger analysis on how to build a world revolution.

Those who read this article and study the minutes of the congress may be shocked at the continuing relevance of its theses. Of course, we must always take into account the changes in material conditions of the world — the role of "number 1 imperialist" shifting from Britain to the United States, the structural shift from outright colonialism to neocolonialism, etc.

But the relevance of the Congress of the Peoples of the East speaks to the timeliness of the tools of Marx and Lenin for the study of society and revolution. □



Presidium of the congress.



Delegates gathered in the conference hall.

Llamado a los revolucionarios: Debemos defendernos unos a otros del ataque estatal

Por Partido de Socialismo Unido

Las organizaciones y partidos revolucionarios en los EE.UU. seguramente están conscientes de la importancia del actual período político. Hay manifestaciones masivas en las calles, tanto organizadas como espontáneas, en una total rebelión contra el racismo. Una pandemia global ha demostrado la incapacidad y la absoluta falta de voluntad del imperialismo y el capitalismo monopolista para proteger cualquier cosa que no sean sus ganancias. Y el terror del Estado en forma de asesinatos policiales, ejecuciones extrajudiciales y secuestros, además del belicismo imperialista, sigue siendo la orden del día en todo el mundo.

La conciencia revolucionaria de clase está creciendo entre la clase trabajadora estadounidense de una manera sin precedentes, y la clase dominante capitalista se da cuenta. Sabemos que los capitalistas se están preparando para defender su dominio de clase. Ya vemos el aumento de fuerzas

policiales y militares en colusión con pandillas fascistas supremacistas blancas, dirigidas a sofocar las rebeliones contra el racismo y el terror policial.

Es por esto que el Partido de Socialismo Unido/Socialist Unity Party urgentemente hace un llamado a la unidad, coordinación y preparación entre partidos y organizaciones revolucionarias en los Estados Unidos. Una situación crítica se está desarrollando en el centro global del imperialismo y a medida que se intensifiquen las diversas luchas, llegarán a un callejón sin salida sin liderazgo revolucionario de la clase trabajadora.

Es la responsabilidad de los partidos y organizaciones revolucionarias, armados con la combinación de teoría y práctica revolucionaria de por décadas, de preparar a las masas para este período político y los venideros. Para eso, las

fuerzas revolucionarias dispersas geográfica y políticamente, deben comenzar a unirse.

El Partido de Socialismo Unido propone un primer paso hacia esta unidad: Debemos comprometernos a defendernos unos a otros de los ataques del Estado. Ya hemos visto a revolucionarios secuestrados y encarcelados por su heroica labor en las rebeliones. El Partido de Socialismo Unido pide a todos los partidos y organizaciones que planteen estos casos para que el movimiento pueda amplificarlos y darlos a conocer a nuestra clase para movilizar apoyo.

El aumento y la disminución del movimiento en este período requerirá que las fuerzas revolucionarias evalúen, analicen y planifiquen constantemente nuestros próximos pasos. Pero lo que seguramente se requerirá es una unidad más fuerte entre los partidos y las organizaciones revolucionarias.

Esperamos sinceramente que este pueda ser el primer paso.

¡Unidos hacia la victoria y liberación!



Appeal to revolutionaries:

We must defend each other from state attack

By Socialist Unity Party

Revolutionary parties and organizations in the U.S. are surely aware of the significance of today's political period. There are the massive outpourings into the streets, both organized and spontaneous, in an all-out rebellion against racism. A global pandemic has laid bare the inability and outright unwillingness of imperialism and monopoly capitalism to protect anything but profits. And state terror in the form of police murder, extrajudicial killings and kidnappings, and imperialist warmongering continues to be the order of the day around the world.

Revolutionary class consciousness is building among the U.S. working class in an unprecedented way, and the capitalist ruling class sees it. We know that the capitalists are gearing up to defend

their class rule. Already we see the ramping up of police and military forces, in collusion with fascist white supremacist gangs, aimed at quelling the rebellions against racism and police terror.

This is why the Socialist Unity Party/Partido de Socialismo Unido urgently calls for unity, coordination and preparation among the revolutionary parties and organizations in the United States. A critical situation is unfolding in the global center of imperialism, and as the various struggles intensify, they will reach a dead end without revolutionary working-class leadership.

It is the responsibility of revolutionary parties and organizations, armed with revolutionary theory and decades of combined revolutionary practice, to ready the masses for this political period and those to come. In order to do this, the

revolutionary forces, scattered geographically and politically, must begin to unite.

The Socialist Unity Party proposes a first step towards this unity: We must commit to defend each other from state attack. We have already seen revolutionaries kidnapped and imprisoned for their heroic work in the rebellions. The Socialist Unity Party calls on all parties and organizations to raise these cases so the movement can amplify them to our class and mobilize support.

The waxing and waning of the movement in this period will require the revolutionary forces to constantly assess, analyze and strategize our next steps. But what is sure to be required is a stronger unity between revolutionary parties and organizations. It is our sincere hope that this can be the first step.

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